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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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FROM : American Embassy, MOSCOW

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

January 26, 1962
DATE

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REPORTER

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ACTION ASSIGNED TO:	ACTION TAKEN	
NAME OF OFFICER & OFFICE SYMBOL	DATE OF ACTION	DIRECTIONS TO RM/R

EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

1. Soviet Foreign Relations: After several weeks of relative inactivity on the surface, toward the end of the week Moscow seemed to display signs of greater activity. Khrushchev's name appeared in a news item in the Soviet press for the first time in two weeks in the form of a message of congratulations to Syrian Prime Minister Dawalibi on January 25 (the message was dated from the Kremlin, January 16). Marshal Malinovski gave an interview to Pravda in response to Defense Secretary MacNamara's Senate Foreign Relations Committee testimony that the US could destroy any objective in USSR. Malinovski alleged that the USSR could smash any country which attacked the USSR or its allies, in what was clearly an effort to prove that the USSR is not operating internationally from a position of weakness. On January 25 the Soviet press also burst forth in a campaign "to save the life" of Gizenga reminiscent of the similar campaign launched when Lumumba was arrested in 1961. On January 25 the first Soviet press mention of current US-Soviet bilateral conversations on Berlin was made in Izvestiya, but there was no indication who is conducting the talks or where they are being held. The article took the position that a Berlin settlement can not be pidgeon-holed indefinitely, but a note said the article reflected the personal views of its author.

2. Berlin/Germany. Following a hiatus of approximately 10 days, the Soviet press resumed commentary on Berlin in the form of several analytical articles which seemed designed to unfold for the Soviet public the themes in the Soviet December 27 memorandum to Bonn. The Soviet memo has still not been mentioned in the Soviet press, although a public lecturer described it in some detail on January 20. The articles emphasized the stated Soviet desire for closer cooperation with Bonn. They also stressed the alleged benefits which Bonn would receive if they responded to the appeal for a revival of the spirit of Rapallo to secure the peace of Europe.

Meanwhile, the propaganda campaign against General HEUSINGER and West German militarism continues, but in reduced volume. The apparent contradiction between attacks against the Federal Republic and calls for improved bilateral relations may explain the failure of the Soviet press to publish the memo and the labored effort to describe the new tack in the course of Soviet policy toward Bonn.

The question of negotiations on Berlin also drew comment during the week. Izvestiya (January 18), in discussing the President's State of the Union message, criticized as naive American sources who suggest a separate peace treaty could be followed by a maintenance of the status quo in Berlin. The public lecturer who discussed the December 27 memo, also referred to the talks between Ambassador THOMPSON and GROMYKO. He stated the Ambassador has stressed the need for guaranteed access to Berlin and proposed an international autobahn authority. The lecturer criticized the reported revival of an all-Berlin solution by the Ambassador and warned the US Embassy in Moscow cannot be expected to succeed in these discussions until Paris and Bonn are "forced into line."

3. Malinovsky Interview. On January 4, Pravda published an interview with Marshal Malinovsky, the Minister of Defense, in which he took exception to statements recently made before the US Senate Armed Services Committee by Secretary of Defense MacNamara. Malinovsky said that Mr. MacNamara's remarks were imprudent and not aimed at improving relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. Recalling that President Kennedy had admitted on one occasion that the forces of the two countries were equal, Malinovsky went on to say that American leaders should draw the proper conclusions and pursue a reasonable policy. Malinovsky claimed that the USSR was capable of wiping off the face of the earth targets in the United States and of destroying entire countries that provided territories for American military bases.

The effect of the Malinovsky interview was likely to raise questions among Soviets regarding the need to increase further budgetary allocations for military matters, the status of Soviet defense shelters, and the feasibility of the peaceful coexistence line in face of a continued US arms build-up. He appeared to answer these queries with remarks that (1) military stockpiles are now adequate and the main problem would be one of modernizing weapons, (2) shelters would be useless in event of a nuclear war, and (3) increased American arms expenditures can be explained by the desire for profits by US monopolists, and explanation that served to avoid blaming the President. It is of interest that Malinovsky in his interview failed to repeat his statement before the 22nd Party Congress to the effect that the USSR had solved the problem of an anti-missile rocket.

4. Congo. The Soviet press is now undertaking a widespread campaign to engender mass pressures against the arrest of Antoine Gizenga. In doing so, a parallel is invariably drawn to the events of January, 1961 which ended in the death of Patrice Lumumba. The entire campaign is apparently designed to portray the Soviet Union as the real defender of the unity, freedom and independence of the Congo. At the same time, more and more criticism is being directed against the United States for allegedly using the UN flag in the Congo as a mask for carrying out provocative actions aimed at destroying progressive forces in the Congo.

5. United Nations. Recent commentaries in the Soviet press have expressed general satisfaction with the course of the 16th Session of the UN. Emphasis is invariably placed on the admission of new African states, which, in the Soviet view, are more and more tipping the balance against the Western powers in the UN organization. Nevertheless, Soviet dissatisfaction with developments in the Congo is quite evident; and one Soviet commentator again implied that the Soviets would continue to press their "troika" proposals in an effort to inhibit the UN from taking actions contrary to the interests of the Soviet Union in such situations as the Congo.

6. Southeast Asia. The Soviet press reported the fress agreement of the three princes in Geneva to establish a coalition and treated this development favorably but did not say it means that a peaceful settlement finally is assured. Sporadic reports of ceasefire violations, allegedly by Phoumi's forces, continued to appear. In other parts of Southeast Asia, Thailand and South Vietnam were painted as negative forces propped up by US aggressive circles. Cambodia was the subject of several approving press articles. Indonesia and West Irian dropped out of the headlines.

7. Punta del Este Conference. The preliminary Soviet press reaction to the first days of the OAS Conference was cautiously optimistic that matters would go badly for the US. Izvestiya January 23 described the opening day as "A Bad Day for the Yankees" in an editorial which cited growing popular support for Cuba's cause, resistance to US pressure, and a "surprise switch" by Haiti which supposedly refused to "take sides." However all articles avoided any prediction that the US would suffer a defeat at the Conference, and warned it is too early to suggest what the results will be.

8. Bulgarian Air Force Jet Crash in Italy. Western press treatment of the forced landing by a Bulgarian Air Force jet near Bari, Italy, was sharply criticized in a TASS report on January 24 carried in all Moscow papers. The report ascribed the event to a loss of bearings by a youthful pilot on a training flight. West press reports that the plane was engaged in aerial espionage were described as "lies" manufactured in an "incredible effort" to increase international tensions.

9. Finnish Defense Delegation. The Finnish Minister of Defense arrived in Moscow on January 23 reportedly to discuss the purchase of Soviet military equipment. The mission apparently plans to utilize some of the unexpended balance which remains from a prior Soviet credit. The Finnish Embassy has stated that the Minister will stay for only a few days, but a team of officers will remain behind to execute the actual purchases.

INTERNAL - POLITICAL

10. Leadership. The continuing absence of firm information on the whereabouts and activities of N. S. KHRUSHCHEV, together with new signs that the Party leadership continues to discuss issues of prime political importance, resulted in a further proliferation of rumors during the week. Japanese correspondents were said to have sent stories surmising that Khrushchev was dead -- a report that may turn out to be both exaggerated and premature. A story was current to the effect that foreign air-line crews were being searched with more than customary thoroughness before they left the USSR, and this development was explained as connected with the exporting of rubles to Switzerland by members of the Soviet ruling group, who are said to be buying dollars there (four rubles buys one dollar, according to this report) and banking them in special accounts. MOLOTOV was said to have missed the train on January 6 because he had the grippe. Another, more plausible, explanation of his failure to return to Vienna was that a decision was still pending on the case of the "anti-Party group." Other "sources" said the decision had already been taken, or would soon be taken, and that Molotov had not been (would not be) excluded from the Party, but the other members of the "group" had (would).

All this added up to little enough in terms of verifiable fact, but it did reflect the intensification of puzzlement produced by the obscure signals of the Soviet press and the lack of reliable information on the whereabouts of Khrushchev. The available facts were:

(1) A conference on questions of Party organizational work was held under the auspices of the CC-CPSU from January 17 to 19. The highest Party leader to

address it was First Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Party Control Z. T. SERDYUK, to judge by meager press accounts.

(2) In Warsaw on January 20, CPSU-CC Secretary DEMICHEV attended a meeting commemorating the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Polish Workers' (Communist) Party. The meeting was addressed by Polish First Secretary Wladyslaw GOMULKA, who may have met with Khrushchev between January 12 and 20.

(3) On January 23, A. I. MIKOYAN returned to Moscow from his visit to four African countries. He was met at Vnukovo Airport by his fellow First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N.KOSYGIN, and Foreign Minister GROMYKO. In reporting his stop-over in Prague on January 22-23, the Soviet press gave Mikoyan's title of Member of the Presidium of the CC CPSU precedence over his Government title, and made it clear that the Prague visit bore a primarily Party character. By the time he landed at Vnukovo, however, Mikoyan had his Government hat back on.

(4) Izvestiya, January 24, and Pravda, January 25, published articles fully rehabilitating the Ukrainian Old Bolshevik N.A.SKRYPNIK, who, accused of "nationalist deviationism", committed suicide in 1933. The Pravda-Izvestiya rehabilitation contradicts the treatment given Skrypnik in "Outlines of the History of the Communist Party of the Ukraine", a work prepared by the Institute of Party History of the CC-CPUkraine and signed to the press August 8, 1961, in which Khrushchev's role in Ukrainian Party history is aggrandized. This rehabilitation is one of the most significant since the XX CPSU Congress in 1956. It marks a further stage in the attack on STALIN, who is accused of favoring LENIN's submission to arrest by the KERENSKY Government in the summer of 1917. The articles undoubtedly have considerable significance in the context of the discussion now going on in the Party leadership (Despatch No. 662, Jan. 26).

(5) On January 25, the Soviet press published an exchange of messages between Khrushchev and the Prime Minister of Syria. Khrushchev's congratulatory telegram is datelined "Moscow, The Kremlin, January 15, 1962". However, past practice has shown that these messages are sent from the Kremlin regardless of whether the signer is at the moment actually in Moscow.

(6) On January 25, a CPSU delegation, headed by CC Secretary Demichev, returns to Moscow from a visit to Poland which began on January 12.

(7) On January 26, the press publishes the texts of congratulatory messages from Khrushchev to NEHRU and BREZHNEV to Rajendra PRASAD on the occasion of the 12th anniversary of the proclamation of the Indian Republic. The messages are datelined "Moscow, The Kremlin, January 25, 1962".

(8) Also on January 26, the press announces the publication, in a "mass edition" of unspecified size, of Khrushchev's January 12 speech to the Byelorussian agricultural conference.

11. Soviet Popular Attitudes on De-Stalinization. Embassy officers who attended a public lecture on January 22 on "The Renewal and Development of Leninist Norms of Party Life and Collective Leadership" were struck by the cynical and unruly attitude of the audience of approximately seventy predominantly elderly people (Despatch No. 658, January 25).

The themes of the lecture were: Stalin made grave ideological mistakes, but even during the period of the "cult of personality" the Party remained creative at the lower levels; the vestigial consequences of the "cult of personality" are now being uprooted; collective leadership and intra-Party democracy have been restored; Leninist norms now prevail; and the new Party Statute provides against any recrudescence of the "cult of personality."

During the question period, written and oral questions were asked about Soviet-Chinese relations; Lenin's testament; why Khrushchev holds three positions; who was responsible for Kirov's death; how many people suffered in the purges; whether the "criminals," Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich, will be expelled from the Party and tried before a court; what collective leadership is, and why nobody raised his voice against Stalin during his lifetime.

The audience became progressively more agitated, noisy, and openly hostile during the question period. After one elderly questioner had badgered the lecturer into asking, rhetorically, "Who did kill Kirov, then?" the audience chorused, "Stalin!"

COMMENT: The Soviet leadership faces a dilemma: on the one hand, it has told the public that Stalin and some of his underlings committed enormous crimes; on the other hand, the regime has not brought to justice those who are said to share in Stalin's guilt. The behavior of the audience at the lecture is evidence that at least some of the Soviet public is deeply skeptical about the performance and intentions of the regime in reestablishing "Leninist norms" and guarding against a repetition of Stalin's abuses.

12. Boris Polevoy May Have Joined Editorial Board of Yunost'. An American newsman reports that the Party-lining writer, Boris N. POLEVOY, may have been pushed into the editorial board of Yunost' within the last two weeks to serve as a Party watch-dog. If the report proves accurate, it would be a step backward for the "liberalizers" of the Soviet literature. Yunost', one of the organs of the USSR Union of Writers, has published a number of thought-provoking works by young, non-conformist writers in recent months and has been criticized for this.

13. Soviets Charge that Jewish Synagogues are Espionage Centers. Trud, on January 19, 1962, published an article entitled, "Zionism--Mask for Spies" (Embassy D-646, January 23). Trud charges that Israeli diplomats in the USSR use synagogues as centers for gathering information and conveying espionage instructions to Soviet citizens.

The article also characterizes Israel as a US puppet and suggests that Israeli First Secretary Jehoshuah PRAT represents American intelligence interests. He is linked directly with the recent Leningrad trial of Jewish leaders accused of "espionage" (WEEKA No. 45, November 10, 1961). Debriefing

centers are said to exist in Vienna and Tel Aviv to facilitate intelligence collection from Israeli tourists and emigrants from the USSR. They are alleged to supply CIA with information under a joint Israeli-US agreement.

Publication of the allegations in Trud, rather than the more authoritative Pravda or Izvestiya, suggests that the regime merely wants to warn the Israeli Embassy to restrain one of its most active officers. No official action has been taken against Prat.

MILITARY (ARMY)

[redacted]

For the Ambassador:

Boris H. Klosson

Boris H. Klosson
Counselor for Political Affairs

[redacted]

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ARTICLE VII

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